

A NEW SPECIES OF OPHIBOLUS FROM WESTERN TEXAS.

BY ARTHUR ERWIN BROWN.

Ophibolus alternus sp. nov. Plate XXXIV.

Maxillary teeth 13; mandibular 14-15. Body moderately slender; head distinct, muzzle contracted; eye rather large. Rostral low and broad, barely visible from above; internasals about half the length of prefrontals; frontal a little longer than the suture between parietals, longer than the snout; parietals large, wide in front, narrow behind; nasals 2, the nostril between them; loreal small, longer than high; preocular 1; postoculars, 2 on one side, 3 on the other; temporals, 2-3 on one side, 3-4 on the other; upper labials 7, third and fourth in orbit; lower labials 11. Posterior chin shields a little shorter than the anterior, not separated by scales. Scales smooth, with two inconspicuous pits, in 25 rows. Ventrals 217; anal entire; subcaudals 60 pairs. Total length 710 mm. (tail 115).

The ground color is slate gray, crossed on the back, at intervals of 3 to 5 scales, by bands of black which are alternately wider and narrower, the wide ones covering from 2 to 3 scales on the middle of the back, and more or less divided transversely on their centres with scarlet. The narrow bands are about one scale wide and wholly black, occasionally broken through by the ground color. On the neck the bands are narrower and less defined, while the red is more pronounced on the posterior part of the body. There are nineteen red and black bands on the body, and an equal number of the intermediate black ones. On the tail there are 5 bands, which form quite distinct rings, on the last two of which the red is absent. The head, including the labials, is dark gray with small dark mottlings, not well defined, and a narrow black streak from the postoculars to the angle of the mouth. Ventral surface grayish white, heavily blotched with black, into which the black portion of the cross bands runs.

Type, No. 14,977 Academy Coll. From the Davis Mountains, Jeff Davis county, Texas. Collected by E. Meyenberg.

The snake here described was received alive at the Zoological Gardens, on October 22, and came from the same locality and collector as the lately described *Coluber subocularis*. In proportions and scale formula it comes nearest to *O. zonatus* Blain. (= *O. pyrrhomelas* Cope), but the head is narrower, the snout more contracted and there are two more rows of scales, while the peculiar disposition of the dorsal cross bands is quite unlike any *Ophibolus* previously known. The species is perhaps intermediate between *O. zonatus* and *O. leonis* Gunth., the type of which came from Nuevo Leon, Mexico.